

REMARKS

Claims 21, 22, 24, and 25 are now pending in the application. Minor amendments have been made to the specification and claims to overcome the objections to the specification and rejections of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 112. The amendments to the claims contained herein are of equivalent scope as originally filed and, thus, are not a narrowing amendment. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejection(s) in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

DRAWINGS

The drawings stand objected to for certain informalities. Applicants have attached revised drawings for the Examiner's approval.

In Figure 2 of the "Replacement Sheets," formal drawing changes have been made to include reference arrows labeled L, F, and V; to change reference numeral 15 to reference numeral 15A; to change reference F to S; and add reference numeral 62.

In Figure 3, reference numeral 24 has been moved; reference numeral 15 has been changed to 15A; reference L has been changed to L1; reference F has been changed to S; and reference numeral 62 has been added.

In Figure 4, reference numerals 24, 41, 14A, 62, 72, 74, and 76 have been added; reference numeral 48 has been changed to reference numeral 34; reference numeral 34 has been changed to reference numeral 48; reference F has been changed to S; and reference L has been changed to H.

Figure 5, which was previously cancelled, has been re-added. In Figure 5, layer 50 is shown surrounding the shaft 70 and served as part of the original application drawings as filed. The original specification, however, did not discuss the elastomeric material 50. Accordingly, the specification has been amended herewith to include recitation of the optional addition of elastomeric material 50 between the tubular member 28 and fastener 70.

In view of the above changes, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections to the drawings are respectfully requested.

SPECIFICATION

The specification stands objected to for certain informalities. Applicant(s) have amended the specification according to the Examiner's suggestions. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of this objection are respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 21-25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 21 and 25 have been amended to remedy the antecedent basis problem regarding the limitation "annular member." Claim 23 has been cancelled, and claim 24 has been amended to distinctly recite the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 21 and 25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Adams (U.S. Pat. No. 3266139) in view of Killworth et al (U.S. Pat. No. 5170985). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 22 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Adams (U.S. Pat. No. 3266139) in view of Killworth et al (U.S. Pat. No. 5170985) and further in view of Johnson et al (U.S. Pat. No. 6419215). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

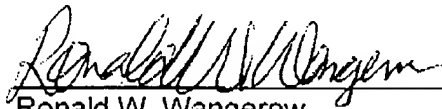
Applicants note that each of the independent claims 21 and 25 include the limitation of "an insert disposed in the elastomeric annular portion and the axially extending portion, the insert including an axially extending tube portion having a length that is approximately equal to a length of the hole in the subframe." Contrary to this, as acknowledged by the Examiner, Adams fails to disclose an insert, as claimed. Furthermore, Killworth et al discloses an insert 162, but does not have an axially extending tube portion having a length that is approximately equal to a length of the hole in the subframe, as claimed. In particular, the axially extending tube portion of the insert 162 is approximately three to four times the length of the hole 46 in the subframe 14. Since all of the limitations of claims 21 and 25 are clearly not met by the combination of Adams and Killworth et al, Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner's proposed combination of Adams and Killworth et al is improper. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: December 9, 2003

By: 
Ronald W. Wangerow
Reg. No. 29,597

FREUDENBERG-NOK General Partnership
Intellectual Property Department
47690 East Anchor Court
Plymouth, MI 48170-2455
(734) 354-5445